

*Water*

# 4 sites exceed safe PCE levels

## Flushing mains cuts contamination

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The Patriot Ledger

DUXBURY — Initial testing of 59 places in Duxbury with vinyl-lined asbestos cement water mains turned up four sites where the amount of perchloroethylene in the water exceeded the level that is considered safe.

As a result, the mains were flushed and residents of the four streets received notices telling them of the test results, the flushing and post-flushing testing.

"We know that the flushing knocks the PCE level down right away," Public Works Director Walter Tonaszuck said yesterday.

The Feb. 28 test at Seabury Point Road in South Duxbury produced a PCE measurement of 10.1 parts per billion. At Stonegate Lane in West Duxbury on March 2, the reading was 6.5 parts per billion. At both Stockade Path in West Duxbury on March 2 and Tanglewood Trail in North Duxbury on March 1, the reading was 5 parts per billion.

Perchloroethylene is a suspected carcinogen.

During the 1970s, vinyl-lined asbestos cement water mains were commonly used throughout New England in new home developments.

Duxbury has about 15 miles of vinyl-lined asbestos cement water mains, Tonaszuck said.

Because PCE levels have a tendency to increase in dead-end and low-flow areas served by such pipe, the public works department's water division has installed "bleeders" in a number of places to keep the water flowing, and it will flush mains as needed to keep PCE levels down.

In response to concerns raised last month by residents of the Plantation Drive neighborhood in West Duxbury, regular tests are being conducted throughout town, and selectmen have appointed an ad hoc committee on water quality to develop a plan for replacing the vinyl-lined pipes.

The committee includes residents from many of the neighborhoods that have vinyl-lined mains, plus representatives of the water division, the board of health, the conservation commission and the water advisory board.